



eric villegas

Award winning chef-restaurateur, cookbook author and television personality Eric Villegas has done more than any other culinarian to introduce the country to the regional and local foods of his beloved Michigan and the Great Lakes.

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The Michigan born chef embarked on his culinary career after studying liberal arts at Michigan State University. Moving to Paris, France he attended Anne Willan's LaVarenne Ecole de Cuisine and Steven Spurrier's Academie du Vin. After which he gained a wide range of practical cooking experience in the classic restaurant kitchens of France's gastronomic capital, Lyon. After two years abroad, Chef Villegas returned to the States to continue his studies at the New England Culinary Institute, where he specialized in the service aspect of hospitality running the school's flagship dining room.

From 1987 to 2007, chef Villegas owned and operated two of mid-Michigan's most unique award winning regional restaurants, Restaurant Villegas and Dusty's Wine Bar where working closely with local farmers and ranchers he developed his now highly recognized contemporary midwestern style.

Since debuting on Michigan public television in 2001, Villegas has been tirelessly seeking out the artisan growers, farmers and ranchers that continuously produce top quality foods for the American table. "Fork in the Road with Eric Villegas" also brings recipes, cooking tips and culinary history based on the Great Lakes food scene.

Originally airing weekly on PBS in his home state of Michigan and Canada, his efforts brought the chef two regional EMMY awards as host for popular show. In late 2007 "Fork" began national distribution via NETA on PBS offering his unique take on regional and sustainable Michigan agriculture and cuisine to the rest of the country. The long awaited companion cookbook to the award winning series hit store shelves in 2007 and immediately garnered the chef another award as being listed as one of Michigan's most notable books of the year.

Villegas keeps a busy schedule with no signs of slowing down. A frequent contributor to "Morning Edition" with Scott Pohl on WKAR public radio, and "The Big Show" with Micheal Patrick Shiels on WJIM the chef keeps his culinary calendar full shooting new episodes of "Fork", cooking demonstrations, book signings and public appearances throughout the Great Lake State and the rest of the country.

While he oversees many projects, each is infused with his culinary passion all the while reminding everyone watching, reading or listening to "think global but to buy and eat local!"
